

TORRANCE

Press Release

Police Department

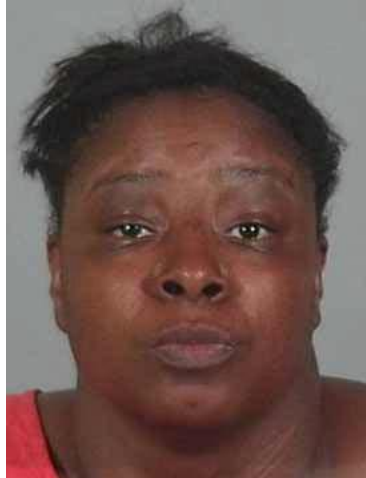
"Pigeon Drop" Grand Theft Arrest

DR# 140037728 / 140038138

July 2, 2014



Jessie Craig
50 years



Mary Rucker
49 years



William Young
60 years

Torrance Police Detectives arrested two adults on June 24, 2014 and a third adult on July 1, 2014, stemming from a found money, "Pigeon Drop" theft scam that originated in front of the *Marukai Market* at the 3800 block of Sepulveda Blvd in the City of Torrance.

Jessie Craig, 50 years of Nashville, TN, Mary Rucker, 49 years of Antioch, TN and William Young, 50 years, also of Antioch, TN, were taken into custody without incident after Torrance Detectives were able to link them to a grand theft scam that occurred on June 21, 2014, which duped a 65-year-old victim out of \$2,300 in cash. Craig and Rucker were charged with felony grand theft as well as elder abuse and Young was charged with felony grand theft and elder abuse from a similar incident.

The suspects would commonly befriend a stranger in a public place and advise them that they have located a pouch containing over \$100,000 and that the money could be split if the person contacted agreed to pay taxes on the found cash. One of the suspects would claim he worked for a bank and would take the cash there to confirm the "authenticity" and when he returned a short time later he advised the victim that in addition to cash there was also a large amount of lottery tickets and bonds valued at well over \$10 million dollars inside. The suspect would ask that additional "good faith" money be needed to "equally" and "legally" split the contents in the pouch. Torrance Police were contacted when the suspects agreed to meet the victim again on June 24, 2014 and through their investigation, the suspects were contacted and subsequently arrested.

All three suspects are responsible for a similar incident that occurred on June 20, 2014, at the 24200 block of Crenshaw Blvd in the City of Torrance where the suspects duped a 73-year-old female out of over \$20,000 in cash and jewelry. Detectives believe several similar incidents have occurred by these individuals in the Southern California area as well as in neighboring states as far as Tennessee and Texas.

This case is being investigated under the command and direction of Captain Rodney Irvine of the Special Operations Bureau. Anyone with additional information related to these cases or any other similar occurrence is encouraged to contact the Torrance Police Department Detective Division at (310) 618-5570.

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TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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